

Divine Mercy Cenacle: Week 1

Opening Prayer: (D#1747)

All throughout St. Faustina's Diary, *Divine Mercy In My Soul*, she will intersperse passages where she is recalling and describing events and circumstances in her life, conversations in the interior of her soul with Jesus, The Father, the Blessed Mother, Angels, as well as spontaneous prayers. This opening prayer is from a beautiful section of her Diary where she has recorded numerous of these prayers (D #1729 – 1751)

- 1146 Let the greatest sinners place their trust in My Mercy. Repentant souls delight Me.
- 699 Tell all the world of My inconceivable Mercy. *Feast of Mercy, Confession, Communion.*
- 1273 No misery is a match for My Mercy.
- 1447 They treat Me as a dead object.
- 1448 Miracle of Mercy through *Sacrament of Reconciliation.*
- 611 Mercy the greatest attribute of God.
- 379 Mistrust wounds My Heart. Believe My Wounds.
- 1541 My Mercy has never disappointed. *Chaplet.*
- 1182 No one have I excluded.
- 1142 Apostle of My Mercy, write every sentence.

- 1507 Set ajar the door of your heart.
- 1730 A contrite heart is never refused.
- 908 Jesus, grant poor souls contrition and repentance. *Holy Communion.*
- 1739 I am Mercy for the contrite soul.
- 1728 I detest the smallest sin. I pursue sinners; there is no escape.

- 1588 Day of Mercy before the Day of Justice.
- 635 Blessed Mother speaks of her Son, the merciful Savior, coming as the just Judge.
- 1160 Prolonging the time of mercy before the Day of Justice

Brief Chronology for the Life of St. Faustina

- 1905, Aug 25** Helena Kowalska born on a small farm in the village of Glogowiec, Poland, the 3rd of 10 children.
- 1912** Seven-year old Helena hears the voice of God in her soul and feels the first stirrings of a religious life. (D#7)
- 1917** Helena begins her primary education (at the age of twelve).
- 1919** When the older children in the school are asked to leave to make room for younger children, Helena's education comes to an end after just three years. At fourteen Helena goes to work for the Bryszewski family as a domestic, doing household work and watching the family's children.
- 1922** When she is seventeen, Helena confides to her parents that she wishes to enter a convent. Even though her parents are deeply religious, they are too poor to lose their hardest working daughter or to afford appropriate clothing for her. They refuse. (D#8)
- 1924** Helena, now 19, is at a dance in Lodz, Poland with her sisters when she suddenly has a vision of the crucified Christ. (D#9) "How long shall I put up with you and how long will you keep putting Me off?"
- She leaves the dance and goes immediately to the Cathedral of St. Stanislaus Kostka and prostrates herself before the Blessed Sacrament and asks Jesus to tell her what to do. (D#9-10)
- 1924, July** Helena goes to Warsaw to enter a convent there. She knocks on many convent doors but is repeatedly turned away. (D#13)
- 1924, Aug** She finally knocks on the door of the Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy. (D#14-15)
- In order to pay for her religious habit, she again goes to work as a domestic for nine more months.
- 1925, Aug 1** Helena again applies to the Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy and is accepted. The Mission of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy is to educate and rehabilitate delinquent and abandoned girls. Only the sisters of the "first choir" are involved in the work of education. The sisters of the "second choir" attend to the domestic chores of the convent. Helena was accepted as a member of the "second choir". (D#17)

- 1925, Aug 22** She has a very short “honeymoon” period. After three weeks Helena wants to leave the Congregation to enter a stricter order. She feels that there is too little time for prayer. (D#18-19)
- 1926, Apr 30** Helena Kawalska receives her habit and is given the name Sister Maria Faustina. She later adds “of the Blessed Sacrament” to her name.
- 1931, Feb 22** Sister Faustina has a mystical vision of the Lord Jesus, dressed in a white robe. Red and pale rays stream forth from the area of His Heart. “Paint an image,’ He tells her, “according to the pattern you see, bearing the signature, ‘Jesus, I Trust In You.’” (D#47-50)



Biography of St. Faustina

Helena Kowalska was born on August 25, 1905 in Glogowiec, Poland, the third of the ten Kowalski children. Her family was very poor, to the extent that Helena and her sisters had only one "good" dress between them to wear to church! They had to share it, each girl going to a different Mass and then returning so that the next girl could wear the dress to the following Mass. At the age of 15, Helena left the school which she had been attending for three years, to work in support of her family. Already she was considering a vocation to the religious life; since the age of seven, she had heard a call to holiness deep in her soul, and understood that God was calling her to be a nun. By the time she was eighteen, she was convinced of her vocation, and asked her parents for permission to enter the convent. However, her parents refused; Helena was their favourite daughter, and they did not want to lose her.

Later, Helena wrote that after this disappointment, "I gave myself up to vanities, neglecting the call of grace." She tried to forget her vocation and began to stifle her conscience with worldly amusements. But God had great plans for Helena, and He would not permit this desertion! One beautiful night, Helena and her sister were at a dance with the other young people of the village. While she danced, Jesus suddenly appeared to her, covered with wounds, and very sad. He said to her, "**How long will I put up with you, and how long will you keep putting me off?**" Realizing with a sudden horror what she was doing, Helena left the dance and went to the Cathedral of Saint Stanislaus Kostka, where she prostrated herself on the ground, begging God to tell her what to do.

Once more Jesus spoke in her soul; "**Go immediately to Warsaw; you will enter a convent there.**" Helena wasted no time in following the command. She got up, "took care of things that need to be settled," and without saying good-bye to anyone except her beloved sister, she took the next train to Warsaw.

Once arrived in the capital of Poland, Helena asked the advice of a priest, who sent her to stay with a pious lady while she looked for a convent. But all the convents where she asked for admission sent her away. Despite her discouragement, Helena kept searching, and finally she was accepted at the convent of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy, an order which took care of wayward or neglected girls. But before entering, she had to work as a servant in order to save money for the dowry which the convent required to pay for her habit and other expenses. A year later, on August 1, 1925, she entered as a postulant. On April 30, 1926, Helena became a novice,

taking as her "name in religion," the name "Sister Mary Faustina of the Blessed Sacrament."

Soon St. Faustina began to receive heavenly visions. She visited Purgatory; she saw and spoke to Jesus and Mary several times. At last Jesus revealed to her the work for which she had been created: to spread the devotion to the Mercy of God. On February 22, 1931, He appeared to her as King of Divine Mercy, "wearing a white garment. One hand was raised in a sign of blessing; the other was touching the garment at the breast. From beneath the garment. . . emanated two large rays, one red, the other pale." Jesus asked St. Faustina to have an image painted of Him as she saw Him, but her superiors hesitated. At last, God sent her a new spiritual director, Father Michael Sopocko, who helped her to promulgate devotion to the Mercy of God. It was Fr. Sopocko also who ordered her to write a diary of the graces she received, even though she had a hard time writing and spelling because of her scanty education. The diary was later published under the title *Divine Mercy in My Soul: The Diary of St. Faustina*.

Because of her visions, life in the convent became very difficult for St. Faustina. The other sisters in the convent often ridiculed her and openly laughed at her, saying that she was deceived and did not really see Christ. Since in their eyes she was only a poorly-educated, peasant-class nun of the second choir, (the second choir nuns were from poorer, less well-educated families; they did the humble household chores while the better-educated nuns of the first choir managed and taught in the houses for wayward girls. Today this distinction has been eliminated from the order.) they thought that she could not possibly have been chosen by God for great things. Without her realizing it, entries in her diary give a most embarrassing picture of the lack of charity and holiness that can prevail even in convents where everyone is supposed to be striving to reach perfection.

Often Jesus came and comforted her. Once, on Shrove Tuesday, when she was sobbing in agony over the sins committed during the Mardi Gras carnivals, Jesus appeared to her, and clasped her to His Heart, saying, "**My daughter, do not weep, for I cannot bear your tears. I will grant you everything you ask for, but stop crying!**" This shows us how much the love of God for His consecrated virgins is like the love of a true spouse - His heart is even more tender than that of a loving husband.

At the same time, Faustina's health, never strong, began to deteriorate quickly. Unfortunately, the other nuns did not believe she was truly ill and thought she was only trying to get out of having to work hard. Eventually, the superior of the convent gave her the task of gatekeeper, since the work Faustina had been doing in the garden was becoming too difficult for her. This new duty gave St. Faustina the chance to practice mercy to others, since she was now in contact with the poor people of the city, and those who came to beg at the convent door. She listened to the tale of their miseries with kindness, and used tact in giving them what they needed, so that they would not be embarrassed. Once, Jesus Himself came to the door as a poor young man, and

asked for food. St. Faustina gave him some soup and bread, and after eating it, Jesus revealed Himself to her, and told her that He had come down from His heavenly throne to "taste the fruits of her mercy." Her spiritual director, Father Sopocho, assisted her in having the Divine Mercy image painted. He used his own money to have copies of the image, together with the Chaplet of Mercy, printed on leaflets for wide distribution, and some of the superiors became convinced that she was telling the truth. The images were publicly displayed in Cracow and in Vilnius, and people began to come to pray before them.

Jesus also revealed to St. Faustina that He wanted her to found a "Congregation which will proclaim the Mercy of God to the world, and, by its prayers, obtain it for the world." Again, St. Faustina's superiors would not give her the permission necessary to leave the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy to found the congregation which Jesus was requesting, since she had already made her final vows binding her for life to the order she had originally entered. The poor nun asked God how she could possibly do what He asked of her, since she had to obey her superiors. Jesus reassured her, saying that His Will would always be done, and telling her not to fear. Every time she tried to leave the convent, either her health failed or her mind became so darkened that she didn't know what to do, and her spiritual directors always put things off until her situation improved. This conflict between what Jesus was telling her to do, and what her superiors, who were the voice of God's will for her, told her to do, was one of St. Faustina's greatest crosses. In fact, she died without ever leaving the Congregation of Our Lady of Mercy.

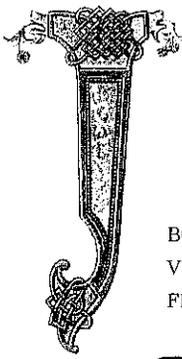
St. Faustina's obedience was put to the test many times. Her superiors did not always agree with what Jesus asked her to do; once, when Faustina went to Mother Jane to ask for permission to make a certain sacrifice which Jesus had requested, the Mother scolded her and told her she was not allowed to make the sacrifice. As St. Faustina turned away, she saw Jesus standing in the doorway. He told her that He had been present during the interview, and that simple obedience was much more pleasing to Him than all the sacrifices and prayers possible. Throughout her life, her Divine Spouse always encouraged her to obey completely.

In 1936, St. Faustina became so ill that her superiors sent her to the sanatorium in Pradnik. (The cause of her illness was not at that time stated by the doctors, but it seems to have been tuberculosis.) There, she seized the opportunity to speak of God's mercy to those who visited her, and to the other patients in the hospital, many of whom were not Catholic. She spent much time in prayer, reciting the Chaplet of Mercy and praying for the conversion of sinners. Towards the end of her life, Jesus told her that her prayers were so pleasing to Him that He could not resist them. He continued to speak to her of the Divine Mercy, calling her His "secretary."

The next two years of St. Faustina's life were spent working as much as she could between visits of the sanatorium and time spent sick in bed in the convent. By June of 1938, she could no longer write in the diary, and it became obvious that she would not live much longer. St. Faustina

died on October 5, 1938. The task of spreading the message of Divine Mercy, already well begun, was continued by her spiritual director, Father Sopocko, who outlived her by almost thirty-eight years. Faustina had never been able to found the religious order which Jesus had asked for, but she had left clear rules for the life of the prospective community, and at last in 1941, the order, now known as the Institute of Divine Mercy, was founded. In 1958, the Holy See issued a document condemning the work of Divine Mercy, because St. Faustina's diary was misinterpreted by theologians who did not take into into consideration her lack of education which resulted in poor spelling and punctuation, and many unclear sentence constructions that suggested heretical teachings. Father Sopocko was harshly reprimanded, and all his work was suppressed. The archbishop of Cracow, however, permitted the nuns to leave the original picture hanging in their chapel so that those who wished to continue to pray before it could do so.

It was through the intervention of Karol Wojtyla, then the archbishop of Cracow and the future Pope John Paul II, that a new investigation into the life and diary of St. Faustina was finally launched, and the devotion to the Divine Mercy was once again permitted. St. Faustina was beatified on April 18, 1993 and canonized on April 30, 2000.



St. Faustina Kowalska

BORN 1905; DIED 1938
VIRGIN AND RELIGIOUS
FEAST DAY: OCTOBER 5

GOD usually chooses his messengers from the humble, those who are unknown to the world. In the case of his message of Divine Mercy, he chose St. Faustina Kowalska, a nearly illiterate Polish nun whose life was one of humility and obedience.

Faustina's parents, Stanislaw Kowalski and Marianna Babel, lived in Glogowiec, a village in central Poland west of Lodz. They were poor peasants who worked poor land; Faustina's father also worked as a handyman and carpenter to make ends meet. Childless for the first ten years of their marriage, they eventually had three sons and seven daughters, of whom two died in infancy. Faustina was the third child in the family. Her father was a strict parent, while her mother was pious and taught the faith to her children. Faustina's siblings were unruly and disobedient, so Faustina stood out among them as the only obedient child. Even as a young child she was prayerful and compassionate to those even poorer than herself. Because her father had taught her to read, Faustina was able to learn about missionaries, whose stories she repeated to the other children in the village. Her early ambition was to be a missionary, and the children all wanted to follow her. She frequently wanted to be in church near the Blessed Sacrament, and first felt called to the life of a nun when she was seven.

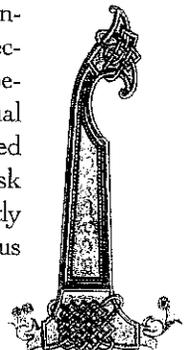
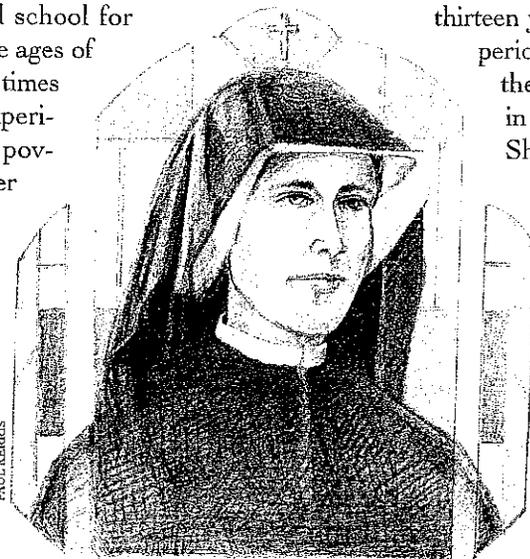
Although an excellent student, Faustina was permitted to attend school for only three years, from the ages of twelve to fourteen. Many times during this period she experienced the humiliation of poverty. She and her two older sisters had only one dress among them, so only one could go to church at a time. At one point in Faustina's childhood, when her father found his children unwilling to do the farm work, he said that the one allowed to go to church would be the one who

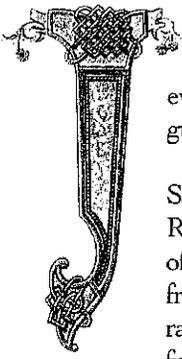
led the cows to pasture. Faustina rose at night and took the cows out. When her father discovered the cows gone, he at first thought that Faustina had allowed them to ruin his wheat and rye crops and intended to spank her with a belt, until he found that the cows had followed her neatly between the fields, damaging nothing.

At fifteen, Faustina left home to work as a domestic servant to support herself and help her parents. Twice, when she was sixteen and eighteen, she asked permission from her parents to enter a convent, but both times they refused. She then decided to suppress her vocation. On one occasion, when she was nineteen, she went with two of her sisters and a friend to a dance in a park. There she saw a vision of a disgraced, naked Jesus, his body covered in wounds, who sternly called her to follow her vocation at any cost. She realized in horror what she had been doing, left the dance, went to the cathedral, asked Jesus what she should do, and was instructed to go to Warsaw to enter a convent. She did so immediately, living with a family while she sought admission. Refused by several orders, she was finally admitted to the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy in Warsaw. She then worked for nearly a year to amass the required modest dowry, and entered a few weeks before her twentieth birthday.

Although the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy specialized in helping troubled and disadvantaged girls, Faustina never participated directly in this work, for she was viewed as unqualified. Instead, she served as cook and gardener in the various convents to which she was assigned over the next

thirteen years, living for the longest periods of time in Vilnius (now the capital of Lithuania) and in Plock and Krakow, Poland. She performed her assigned tasks with great dedication, faithfully observed the rule of the convent, and was known to be full of kindness. She was unaffected, serene, and recollected. When she became too ill for manual labor, she was assigned as a gate-keeper, a task that allowed her directly to practice charity. Jesus





even came once to the gate of the convent, in the guise of a poor young man.

Faustina was especially devoted to the Blessed Sacrament, Mary Immaculate, and the sacrament of Reconciliation. At twenty-five, she received the first of several messages concerning God's divine mercy from Jesus, seeing him dressed in a white robe with rays of white and red — water and blood — flowing from his Sacred Heart. Jesus told her that she was to be his "apostle and secretary" of divine mercy, instructing her to spread this message throughout the world. At the command of her spiritual director, she kept a diary, eventually seven hundred pages long, of her visions and mystical experiences. Her extremely limited schooling resulted in her writing phonetically and in not using punctuation or quotation marks.

The mission of Faustina, as given by Jesus, was threefold. The first part was proclaiming and spreading the truth revealed in Scriptures about the merciful love of God for every person. The second part was imploring God's mercy for the world, especially for sinners, through four new forms of devotion. The first devotion was veneration of an image of Divine Mercy with the inscription "Jesus, I Trust in You." In 1935 she commissioned a painting of the image, only to be disappointed with the result since it failed to measure up to her vision of him. However, Jesus assured her that the quality of the painting was not important. The second devotion was the establishment of a Feast of Divine Mercy. The third devotion was a prayer at the Hour of Mercy — 3:00 p.m., the hour when Jesus died — which preferentially would be the Stations of the Cross, but could also be adoration of Jesus' Sacred Heart in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament, or even a simple, short prayer at that time. The final devotion was the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, a prescribed set of prayers said on a rosary. Jesus attached numerous promises to these devotions, provided that they were accompanied by entrustment of one's life to God and the practice of active love of neighbor.

The third part of Faustina's mission was beginning an apostolic movement of Divine Mercy to carry out the task of proclaiming and imploring God's mercy for the world and to live lives of Christian perfection in imitation of her virtues. This meant seeking to fulfill God's will with an attitude of child-like trust in God and of mercy to one's neighbor. Jesus asked her to be model of mercy to others and to live the remainder of her life as sacrifice. Some of her sisters in religion, who saw only the poorly-educated peasant, ridiculed and laughed at her because of her visions. She also suffered physical pain for years, including the stigmata (the wounds of Jesus'

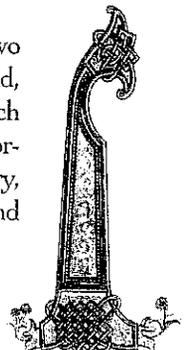
crucifixion), visible only to her, and long years of illness before her death. She accepted this suffering as her sacrifice to God for the sake of sinners.

In addition to visions and private revelations, Faustina received many of the gifts God grants to mystics, including mystical marriage to Jesus and an ability to read souls, to prophesy, and to bilocate (be in two places at once). Yet she did not see these gifts as the means of her sanctification: "Neither graces, nor revelations, nor raptures, nor gifts granted to a soul make it perfect, but rather the intimate union of the soul with God. These gifts are merely ornaments of the soul, but constitute neither its essence nor its perfection. My sanctity and perfection consist in the close union of my will with the will of God."

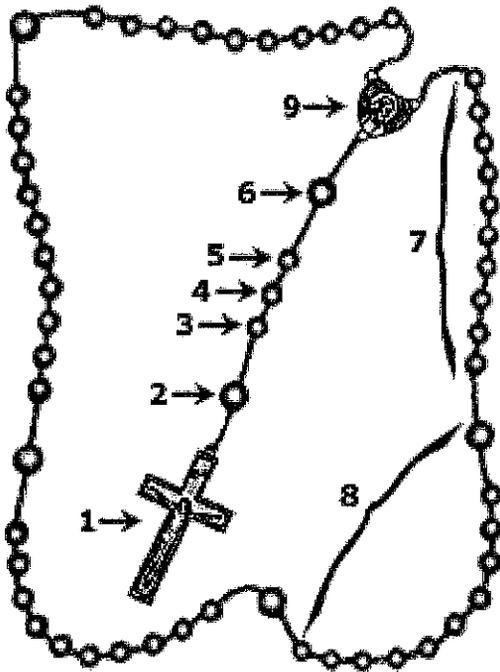
Devotion to the Divine Mercy spread in the cities in which Faustina lived during her lifetime. One of her trials was her superiors' refusal to allow her to follow all of Jesus' commands. She always obeyed her superiors, which Jesus told her was immensely pleasing to him. Among the things she was not permitted to do was to leave her convent to found a new religious order. Instead, she left a rule to be implemented after her death, and the Institute of Divine Mercy was founded in 1941. Today, religious congregations and brotherhoods, lay institutes and associations, and individuals carry out Jesus' instructions to spread devotion to his Divine Mercy throughout the world.

In 1958, a bad translation of Faustina's diary (which is entitled *Divine Mercy in My Soul*) was made as a result of the translator's difficulty in understanding her non-standard spelling and unpunctuated sentences. The diary was labeled heretical by the Vatican, causing the Divine Mercy devotions to be suppressed. When Karol Wojtyla became Archbishop of Krakow, he was besieged by people asking him to reopen an evaluation of Faustina's diary. He ordered that a new translation be done and sent this to Rome for re-evaluation. The Vatican found that there was indeed nothing heretical in it. This opened the way not only to Faustina's canonization by Karol Wojtyla, who had become Pope John Paul II, but also to his dedication of the Second Sunday of Easter (the Sunday immediately following Easter) perpetually as Divine Mercy Sunday in 2000, the last year of the twentieth century.

God does nothing by accident. Between the two most destructive wars in the history of the world, in the heart of a Europe which had begun so much of the warfare and had as well been the most horrifying of the killing fields of the twentieth century, Jesus had told Faustina: "Humanity will not find peace until it turns trustfully to divine mercy."



The Divine Mercy Chaplet



1. Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

2. Optional Opening Prayers

You expired, Jesus, but the source of life gushed forth for souls, and the ocean of mercy opened up for the whole world. O Fount of Life, unfathomable Divine Mercy, envelop the whole world and empty yourself out upon us.

O Blood and Water, which gushed forth from the heart of Jesus as a fountain of mercy for us, I trust in you!

Repeat three times

3. Our Father

Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

4. Hail Mary

Hail Mary, full of grace. The Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

5. Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended into hell; on the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

6. Eternal Father

Eternal Father, I offer you the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of your Dearly Beloved Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ, in atonement for our sins and those of the whole world.

7. On the Ten Small Beads of Each Decade

For the sake of his sorrowful Passion, have mercy on us and on the whole world.

8. Repeat for the Remaining Decades

Say the "Eternal Father" on the "Our Father" bead and then ten "For the sake of his sorrowful Passion" on the following "Hail Mary" beads.

9. Holy God

Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One, have mercy on us and on the whole world.

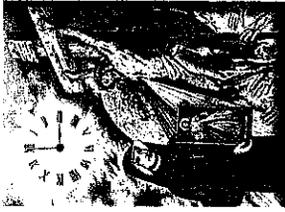
Repeat three times

10. Optional Closing Prayer

Eternal God, in whom mercy is endless and the treasury of compassion inexhaustible, look kindly upon us and increase your mercy in us, that in difficult moments we might not despair nor become despondent, but with great confidence submit ourselves to your holy will, which is love and mercy itself.

Hour of Mercy

The three o'clock hour has always held a special significance for us in our faith. It is the hour Our Lord gave His precious life up for our sins. It is the hour that witnessed the greatest miracle



the world will ever see - the offering of the Son of God for the salvation of the world. In our Lord's revelations to St. Faustina, Jesus asked for a special, daily remembrance at 3:00 o'clock, the very hour He died for us on the cross. He said: *"At three o'clock, implore My mercy, especially for sinners; and, if only for a brief moment, immerse yourself in My Passion, particularly in My abandonment at the moment of agony. This is the hour of great mercy for the whole world. I will allow you to enter into My mortal sorrow. In this hour, I will refuse nothing to the soul that makes a request of Me in virtue of My Passion..."* (Diary 1320)

Why is Divine Mercy so important?

The answer is simple: Through the message of Divine Mercy, our Lord is preparing us for His final coming"
Fr. Seraphim Michalenko, MIC - Vice-Postulator for the canonization of Saint Faustina

Jesus said to St. Faustina, :
"You will prepare the world for my final coming" Diary 429

Eucharistic Apostles of The Divine Mercy
www.divinemercyhawaii.org 808-389-5764

Devotion to

The Divine Mercy



Jesus said to St. Faustina:
"Tell the world about My Mercy and My Love."

Diary 1064

What is Divine Mercy?

The Divine Mercy Message and Devotion has been called the greatest grassroots movement in the history of the Catholic Church and has changed many lives. **Divine Mercy** is defined as one of the greatest attributes of God and has been a part of salvation history from the beginning of humankind. Divine Mercy is the merciful love of God. God wishes to let His boundless love and mercy flow from His own Sacred Heart to all in need. God so wants mankind to seek and trust in His abundant mercy.

Divine Mercy is the Gospel. It's the good news. And so, it gets to the very center of our faith. In the words of Pope Benedict XVI, ***"Divine Mercy is not a secondary devotion, but an integral dimension of Christian faith and prayer."*** St. John Paul II said, ***"Mercy is Love's second name."*** It's a particular kind of love, a particular mode of love when it encounters suffering, poverty, brokenness, and sin. Divine Mercy is when God's love meets us and helps us in the midst of our suffering and sin.

God's love for us always takes the form of mercy. It's always the Lord stepping out in compassion to help us poor, weak, and broken sinners. From our perspective, then, every good we receive is an expression of Divine Mercy.

Jesus told St. Faustina ***"Proclaim that mercy is the greatest attribute of God. All the works of My hands are crowned with mercy"*** (Diary 301).

What is the Message of Divine Mercy?

The message of mercy is that God loves us -- all of us, no matter how great our sins. And He wants us to turn to Him so He can bless us. He wants us to recognize His mercy and let it flow through us to others. Thus, all will come to share in His joy.

The Divine Mercy message is one we can call to mind simply by remembering ABC:

- A - Ask for His Mercy.
- B - Be Merciful.
- C - Completely Trust.

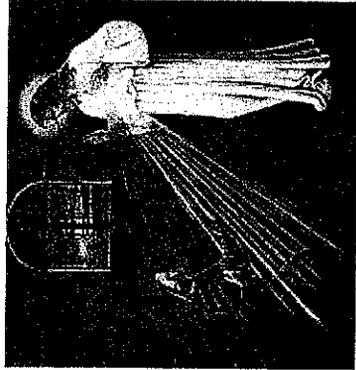
A - Ask for His Mercy. God wants us to approach Him in prayer constantly, repenting of our sins and asking Him to pour His mercy out upon us and upon the whole world.

B - Be merciful. God wants us to receive His mercy and let it flow through us to others. He wants us to extend love and forgiveness to others just as He does to us.

C - Completely trust in Jesus. God wants us to know that the graces of His mercy are dependent upon our trust. The more we trust in Jesus, the more we will receive.

The message is that God wants us to turn to Him with trust and repentance while it is still a time of mercy. This turning with trust to Him is the only source of peace for mankind. ***Turning to and imploring God's mercy is the answer to a troubled world.***

The Devotion to The Divine Mercy



In the 1930s, a young uneducated Polish nun received from the Lord Jesus, a message of mercy that she was told to spread throughout the world. **Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska** was asked to become the apostle and secretary of God's mercy, a model of how to be merciful to others, and an instrument for re-emphasizing God's plan of mercy for the world. The message of mercy given to Saint Faustina is now being spread throughout the world; she was canonized by the Church on April 30, 2000; and her diary, **Divine Mercy in My Soul**, has become the handbook for devotion to The Divine Mercy.

Our Lord not only taught St. Faustina the fundamentals of trust and of mercy to others, but He also revealed special ways to live out the response to His mercy. These we call the **Devotion to The Divine Mercy**. The word "**devotion**" means fulfilling our vows. It is a commitment of our lives to the Lord who is Mercy itself.

By giving our lives to The Divine Mercy – Jesus Christ Himself – we become instruments of His mercy to others.

The devotional practices revealed through Saint Faustina were given to us as "vessels of mercy" through which God's love can be poured out upon the world. Some of the most important "vessels" can be summed up in an acronym or the word "**FINCH**".

- F - Feast of The Divine Mercy.
- I - Image of The Divine Mercy
- N - Novena to The Divine Mercy
- C - Chaplet to The Divine Mercy
- H - Hour of Mercy

Feast of The Divine Mercy

Among all of the elements of devotion to The Divine Mercy, the Feast of Mercy holds first place. The Lord Jesus made it known on 14 revelations concerning the desired feast. Our Lord's explicit desire is that this feast should be celebrated on the first Sunday after Easter. Our Lord said: "*The Feast of Mercy emerged from My very depths of tenderness. It is My desire that it be solemnly celebrated on the first Sunday after Easter. Mankind will not have peace until it turns to the Fount of My Mercy.*"

"On that day the very depths of My tender Mercy are open. I pour out a whole ocean of graces upon these souls who approach the Fount of My mercy [the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Eucharist]. The soul that will go to Confession [beforehand] and receive Holy Communion [on that day] shall obtain complete forgiveness of sins and punishment." Diary 699

St. John Paul II declared on April 30, 2000 "It is important then that we accept the whole message that comes to us from the word of God on this Second Sunday of Easter, which from now on will be called '**Divine Mercy Sunday**'."

Image of The Divine Mercy

On February 22, 1931, Our Lord appeared to St. Faustina Kowalska. She saw Jesus clothed in a white garment with His right hand raised in blessing. His left hand was touching His garment in the area of the heart, from which two large rays came forth, one red and the other pale. Jesus said to her: "*Paint an image according to the pattern you see with the signature: Jesus, I trust in You. I desire that this image be venerated, first in your chapel, and [then] throughout the world. I promise that the soul that will venerate this image will not perish. I also promise victory over its enemies already here on earth, especially at the hour of death. I Myself will defend it as My own glory.*" (Diary 47, 48).



The red ray stands for the Blood which is the life of souls. The pale ray stands for the Water which makes souls righteous. Jesus explained that the rays represented the blood and water which flowed from His pierced side and taught Saint Faustina the prayer: "*O Blood and water which gushed forth from the Heart of Jesus, as a fount of mercy for us, I trust in You*" (Diary 187).

Novena to The Divine Mercy
In preparation for the Feast of The Divine Mercy, the Lord asked St. Faustina to make a novena of prayer from Good Friday to the following Saturday. These nine days of prayer before the Feast of Mercy are like the nine days of prayer in the upper room before the day of the Pentecost. For each of the nine days, our Lord gave St. Faustina different intention: "*I desire that during these nine days you bring souls to the fount of My mercy, that they may draw therefrom strength and refreshment and whatever graces they need in the hardships of life and, especially, at the hour of death.*" (Diary 1209)

Chaplet of The Divine Mercy

Our Lord dictated to St. Faustina on September 1935 a powerful prayer that He wanted everyone to say – the Chaplet of Mercy. The Lord made it clear that the Chaplet was not just for her, but for the whole world. He also attached extraordinary promises to its recitation. Our Lord said, "*Encourage souls to say the Chaplet which I have given you.*" (Diary 1541) *Whoever will recite it will receive great mercy at the hour of death.* (Diary 687) *I desire to grant unimaginable graces to those souls who trust in My mercy.* (Diary 687) *Through the Chaplet you will obtain everything, if what you ask for is compatible with My will.*" (Diary 1731) Jesus said to St. Faustina: "*My daughter, encourage souls to say the chaplet which I have given to you. It pleases Me to grant everything they ask of Me by saying the chaplet.*" (Diary 1541)

